

REMARKS

Claims 1-50 are pending in the application. The Restriction Requirement divides the claims into twenty groups, as follows:

Group I Claims 1-12, 36-50, and 23-24

Group II Claims 13-17

Group III Claims 18-22

Group IV Claim 35

Applicant hereby elects to prosecute the claims of Group I (claims 1-12, 36-50, and 23-24).

Notwithstanding the foregoing, Applicant respectfully traverses the 4-way restriction, and submits that the examination of claims 1-50 can be made without serious burden on the Examiner. Under present practice, there are two requirements for a proper requirement for restriction:

(1) The inventions must be independent ... or distinct as claimed...; **and**

(2) **There must be a serious burden on the examiner** if restriction is not required...

(MPEP 803, emphasis added).

No serious burden has been demonstrated in the restriction requirement. For example, it does not appear that different searches will be required, nor does it appear that there exists a serious burden for the Examiner on other grounds.

Moreover, Applicants submit that the claims of group III (claims 18-22) relate directly to those of elected group I (claims 1-12, 36-50, and 23-24). As discussed in the Restriction

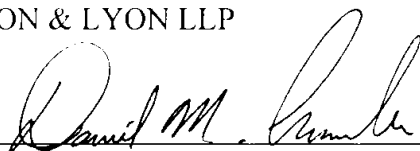
Requirement, groups I and III are related as process of making a product and the product made. The Examiner asserts that the inventions are distinct under MPEP § 806.05(f), because the product claimed can be made by a materially different process, *i.e.*, by hand. However, making the product by hand is within the scope of the claimed invention, and is thus not a materially different process. *See, e.g.*, claim 18. Furthermore, Applicants submit that the search required for group I, classified in class 435, subclass 287.2, and the search required for group III, classified in the same class and subclass, do not materially differ.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the restriction requirement and consider all of the currently pending claims on the merits. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Applicants do not believe that any fee is required for filing this response. However, if a fee is required, please charge Deposit Account No. 12-2475.

Respectfully submitted,

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